The Bible and Cultural Engagement

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Nearly 80% of all Americans profess to be Christian.

From: US Religious Landscape Survey: *Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life*
“... our culture – business culture, law and government, the academic world, popular entertainment – is intensely materialistic and secular. Only occasionally do we hear references to religious transcendence in these realms, and even these are vague, generic, and void of particularity.”
Half of US adults cannot name one of the 4 New Testament Gospels
60% of Americans cannot name 5 of the Ten Commandments
60% of Americans don’t know that Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount
82% of Americans believe that “God helps those who help themselves” is in the Bible
Yet...
Positive Signs

Read the Bible for Life
Your Guide to Understanding & Living God's Word

bible mesh
One God. One Book. One Story.
A Common Christian Strategy
Bible as Culture War Weapon

“You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female. It is an abomination.” Leviticus 18:22
The cultural impotence of the Bible in America is partly a result of how American individualism has shaped Christian thinking about the Bible itself.

- We (American Christians) tend to think the Bible is all about me.
American Individualism & the Bible
A Proposed Solution

- If the Bible is going to make a cultural impact, Christians must return to an understanding of the Scriptures as “The Word of God for the people of God.”
Word of God for the People...

JOSIAH: 2 KINGS 23:2

- The Bible must be read publicly, corporately, extensively, and regularly – not merely personally.
Word of God for the People...

- Public Bible reading must shape the communal life and imagination of the body of Christ – not popular culture
Word of God for the People...

- The encounter between the broader (secular) culture and the Bible must be mediated through the life and practice of the visible church.
A Lesson from History

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